already done it. Still, the prices of PCs are a little higher. As I said, the producers will have to come forward and do it. But it is not true that the PC market is gloomy or that people are not purchasing PCs.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Hyderabad Bypass Expressway

*583. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Andhra Pradesh Government has requested for funding of Rs. 400 crores for Hyderabad Bypass Expressway; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJOR GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The State Government needs to send an integrated proposal for the development of National Highways in and around Hyderabad City. No detailed proposal in this regard has been received from the State Government.

World Bank assistance for Road and Highway Sectors

*584. SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether World Bank is providing any assistance to the State Governments for road and highway sectors;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the programmes being implemented with the said assistance in the country particularly in Uttaranchal, Jharkhand, Gujarat, West Bengal, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh; and

(d) the extent to which the highway and transport productivity have been improved in these States, so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJOR GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) World Bank has provided assistance for projects for improvement/maintenance of State Highways in two States *viz.* Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat for US$ 350 million and US$ 381 million respectively. There is no World Bank assistance for such projects to any other State Government.

(d) As the above two State Highway Projects are under implementation, it is too early to indicate the extent of improvements in highway and transport productivity.

Decline in number of persons seeking H1-B Visa

†*586. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been continuous decline in the number of persons seeking H1-B visa clearance from USA during the last few years;

(b) if so, the number of such persons during the years 1998, 1999 and 2000; and

(c) whether the number of such persons is likely to decline further during the year 2001 and if so, the estimated number thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) For fiscal year 1998 (October 1997 to September 1998), the limit of H1-B visas was 65,000, which was exhausted by May 1998.

For fiscal year 1999 (October 1998 to September 1999) the limit was increased to 115,000 visas, which was used up by June 1999.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.